

## Billion dollar babies of the human genome

The Human Genome Project (HGP) deciphered the entirety of the human genetic code in just over a decade. Though science and medicine will take some time to sift through all of this information and make hay of it, the project, which cost US taxpayers nearly 4 billion dollars, has already had a tangible impact on the US economy by jumpstarting the booming genomics industry

Along with all of the supporting suppliers and technology companies, the industry has spawned hundreds of thousands of jobs and helped drive a total economic impact of nearly \$800 billion, according to a study released yesterday (May 10) by Battelle, an independent science and technology research and development organization. “I can’t imagine a scientific undertaking sponsored by the federal government that has had this kind of fundamental impact and drive on the US economy,” said Simon Tripp of <http://www.battelle.org/> the report’s primary author. While it is impossible to attribute the entirety of the genomics and genomics-enabled industries to the HGP, he added, the overwhelming consensus among those in the field is that it was fundamental to their growth. “If you talk to people in the industry, they all say the HGP was foundational in building the genomics industry. You wouldn’t be able say that the entire internet is because of DARPA’s original expenditures in the ARPANET, but it was certainly foundational in its creation.”

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